

THE HILL PEOPLE

Art of Horizontal Talk Rough on

By JOHN MCKELWAY
Star Staff Writer

These are the times that try spies' souls.

As the sun warms and the city is born again in lazy, brilliant explosions of color, the spy—hot and stuffy in his black cape and dingy, walk-up apartment—struggles with the horizontal language of The Hill. Maybe his reading lamp is even busted.

He is holed-up with canned soup and sardines and a copy of "Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives." Subject of the hearings is Department of Defense Appropriations for 1963.

Trying to ignore the robin on the window-sill, the spy reads from the hearings:

"Mr. Mahon. This is off the subject a bit but, General Breitweiser, does the Air Force believe that Red China is producing atomic weapons?"

Gen. Breitweiser.

This is one of the better examples of horizontal talk. It is employed to prevent a spy in the springtime, when de-

fense hearings are released to the press, public and spies, from determining the defense posture of the United States. It is also used by Joint Chiefs and Congressmen to keep the spy from knowing what he knows about his defense posture.

Its advantages are probably far more effective than ordinary, heavy-handed censorship. It is delicate and subtle and the spy, like a horse, is continually led through testimony toward a meaty disclosure only to find, suddenly, there is nothing—signifying nothing.

The reading spy can know so much and yet so little. For example, "Mr. Mahon" is Representative Mahon, a Democrat from Texas, and chairman of the subcommittee. "Secretary Zuckert" is Eugene M. Zuckert, Secretary of the Air Force. But watch what happens; again from the hearings:

"Mr. Mahon. Is it not true that for fiscal year 1963 you are requesting only about half of what you requested last year?"

Secretary Zuckert.

Speaking horizontally crosses political barriers. It is bipartisan, when needed.

Some say Presidents have used it without knowing.

But a good case in Representative Ford, Republican from the ranking member of the same. Observe Mr. Ford speaking.

"Mr. Ford utters an in this and Secretary

Secretary

800

the fiscal

Mr. Ford

National Mili

much?

Secretary

expected

cremental lay from the Lower Atlantic Coast and I and const the Mississippi and Western Ohio Val tion auth. Some snow is likely in the Upper Gi leadtime Mountains. It will be cooler in the West mis for warning in the Northern Plateau.

Mr. Ford savings in time be far the

the Spring

